

7/02/10 (pm) - Series on Philippians - Sermon 14

Behave Yourself ... when you suffer for Christ!

Phil. 1:27-30

*Theme: Whatever happens, Christians should
conduct themselves in a manner worthy of
the Gospel of Christ.*

How a Christian behaves is important!

1:27a concerns Christian conduct.

It stands at the head of the section
1:27-2:18.

The section 1:27-30 has three parts.

1. The Exhortation (1:27a)

Paul's exhortation *initially* concerns opposition, *cf.* 1:30.

Look at the **key terms** of 1:27a:

Conduct yourselves means *live as a citizen*. Cf. **2:15, 3:20**.

Worthy means *in keeping with*.

The Gospel of Christ was the message they had embraced & experienced.

Overall: Whatever happens you are to
behave as citizens of Philippi & as
citizens of Heaven, in a manner worthy
of the Gospel of Jesus.

Regardless of life circumstance
Christians must behave as Christians .

Cf. Eph. 4:1.

Christians are to show the
transforming power of Gospel.

This leads to positive consequences.

2. The Consequence of Obeying the Exhortation (1:27b-28)

Two words sum up the **consequences**: unity & courage.

- *Not be frightened* - like a horse panicking on battlefield
- *standing firm* - firmly committed as a soldier in battle

- *in one Spirit* – the Holy Spirit. This is the context! cf. 1:19, 2:1.
- *contending* - engaging side-by-side
- as *one man* - soul: heart mind & will
- for *the faith of the Gospel* - doctrine and experience of salvation

When Christians unite against
opposition there is strength.

*In essentials unity,
in non-essentials liberty,
in all things charity.*

(St Augustine)

Unity & courage will be a two-fold
sign:

- of opponents' destruction
- of Christians' salvation. *Cf.* Matt. 5:11.

It is important to bear 1:27b-28 in mind
when persecuted for identifying with
Jesus.

3. The Theological Reason for Obeying the Exhortation (1:29-30)

It was given graciously to the
Philippians to believe on Christ, *cf.* Eph.
1:5; 2:8-9.

It was also given graciously to the
Philippians to suffer for Christ.

Suffering for Christ does not signal God's forgetfulness but is proof of His grace in the Christian's life, *cf.* 2 Tim. 3:12.

Understanding this can greatly help a Christian in a time of persecution for identifying with Christ.

Suffering for Christ should bring a measure of joy, *cf.* Acts 5:41; Jas 1:2-4.

Suffering is the friction that polishes our graces.

(Sinclair Ferguson)

Our greatest learning moments will often come in times of trial.

Conclusion:
**Christians Must Profess the Truth
and Live the Truth!**

Christians' behaviour is particularly important in an age when...

"...any notion that a particular ideology or religious claim is intrinsically superior to another is necessarily wrong. The only absolute creed is the creed of pluralism. No religion has the right to pronounce itself right or true, and the others false, or relatively inferior."

(Don Carson)

Why?

Others can only really judge our behaviour. If they see the Truth (Jesus) in His people they will have to pay attention.

So go and live appropriately as a citizen of Heaven!